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The following lessons were created by **Tim Williams**, a teacher participating in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

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“Archaeology: Digging a Site”
Information Book Mentor Text (Lucy Calkins)

Grade Level	4
Subjects	Language Arts, Wisconsin History
Objectives	*Introduce archaeology in Wisconsin History, *Introduce an informational text to the students and have a working document *Teach the importance of text features and how to add them to a document.
Standards	Wisconsin English Language Arts B.4.1 Create or produce writing to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes B.4.2 Plan, revise, edit, and publish clear and effective writing. B.4.3 Understand the function of various forms, structures, and punctuation marks of standard American English and use them appropriately in communications F.4.1 Conduct research and inquiry on self-selected or assigned topics, issues, or problems and use an appropriate form to communicate their findings.

Duration	Entire Informational Writing Unit - approximately 30 school days
Materials	<p>Non-fiction chapter book w/out text features. (written at a 4th grade level and following the given format) Glossary terms to be added later. Charts, pictures, diagrams to be added later. Variety of non-fiction texts to use for research The Wisconsin Adventure - Student text Wisconsin Our State, Our Story - Student text Lucy Calkins - Grade 4 Information Unit: Bringing History to Life</p>
Vocabulary	Archaeological Site, Archaeologist, Archaeology, Artifact, Cataloging, Digs, Excavation, Features, Surveying,
Background	The information book is the mentor text and will be used to introduce and drive the information unit.
Setting the Stage	Study and take notes on Wisconsin's early people in prior history unit.
Procedure	<p>*Follow the Lucy Calkins book for developing a historical informational book. *Use the information mentor text as the template for the lessons including adding text features as the unit continues.</p>
Closure	Students develop their historical informational books
Evaluation	Students apply the learned skills to write an informational book on their own chosen topic.
Extension	The students will choose one of their information books to "publish" and share with their buddy classes.
References	"Bringing History to Life", Lucy Calkins, Anna Gratz Cockerille, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH

Attachments

Mentor Text - Informational Archaeology,
Glossary terms and definitions

Chapters

- 1 (All About the Bigger Topic) Archaeology
 - 2 (All About the Focused Topic) Studying a Site
 - 3 (The Story of a Big Moment, A Big Decision) Timmy Works a Dig
 - 4 (Why this Focused Topic is Important) Why is proper studying of a site important
- Glossary (This section will not be on the version given to the children)

Chapter 1 Archaeology

Have you ever wondered how we know about people from long ago? How do we know what they ate, what tools they used and where they lived? One way we know these things is through archaeologists studying "digs" at archaeological sites.

Comment [1]: text boxes with glossary terms

You may be thinking to yourself right now, how does an archaeologist find a site? That is a great question! Archaeologists use knowledge about things they know people need to live to help them find sites. They look for places that would have shelter, good food prospects and water sources. Archaeologists also use the knowledge of people who live in the area to help them; they may talk to a farmer or others from the area to see if they have found artifacts and where they did. Archaeologists also have technology that can help them map the land for potential sites.

Comment [2]: Text Feature: list of technology
ground-penetrating radar
lidar, magnetic resistivity meters ,
semi automatted robots, lasers

You also may be wondering, why does an archaeologist study a site? Of course one answer would be to find cool stuff! The best reason why an archaeologist studies a site is to answer a question they have. They might want to know what ancient people ate and what tools they used. They may be trying to find out if people from certain areas traded with those from another area or they might want to know how many people lived in a region during a certain time period.

Chapter 2 Studying a Site

There are three main aspects to studying a site. The first is surveying the site for possible places to dig. The second is the excavation, or digging, of a portion of the site. The third step is cataloging and studying the artifacts.

Surveying

Archaeologists don't just walk into an area and start digging. Archaeologists have a variety of ways to find potential spots to dig. One way is to walk through a recently plowed field and look for surface artifacts. The archaeologist mark the spot where an artifact was found and dig in a place that has a lot of artifacts.

Another way to find a potential dig spot is through core sampling. The archaeologist will drill a hollow tube into the ground and pull up a column of soil.

The column will give archaeologists the information they need to decide to start a dig there.

Other ways to help find an area in a site to dig include: an experienced archaeologist having a feeling where a potential dig spot will be based on past experience and knowledge, feature spots such as wall structures, and different technologies can help too!

Digging the Site

What you may find surprising is archaeologists do not always just completely clear a site of artifacts and features. They also do not just grab a shovel and start digging away. Archaeologists follow a procedure when digging a site. One of the first things an archaeologist does is grid out the dig site. They make a pattern much like a chessboard with set coordinates to know where to dig and how to identify where an artifact came from. The archaeologist often places metal pins in the ground at the corners of the grids.

Comment [3]: Text feature - picture of a dig site map with number grids.

After mapping out the site the digging begins in specific excavation units. It might be more accurate to say the scraping begins. A thin layer of soil is scraped off the top. The soil is tossed into a screen where the soil is sifted so the artifacts are left behind. The artifacts are collected and placed in a bag that is labeled for the designated excavation unit. This process continues until the first level is reached. A level can be any set depth but typically a small amount such as 5 cm.

Comment [4]: pictures w captions of scraping & sifting

The sides of the unit are then squared off and all the artifacts are bagged. Now the archaeologists begin on their next level. The process continues until the bottom of the site is found. This is often determined by the change in soil types.

Cataloging and Studying

When an archaeologist brings the artifacts back to lab the important job of analyzing and categorizing the artifacts begins. All of the artifacts from a single level in an excavation unit are cleaned, sorted and categorized.

Comment [5]: pictures of the process and steps also an example of a cataloging sheet.

After all the levels are categorized the analysis begins. Archaeologist determine through the artifacts the answer to their questions. They may have wanted to know what type of pottery was used in this region and they can determine it through the pieces of pottery found in the dig. They also may have wanted to know what type of technology the people had. During the dig they may have found arrowheads with specific design patterns that will help answer that question.

Through surveying, digging, and analyzing the artifacts archaeologists can find a lot out about the people from the past!

CHAPTER 3 Timmy's Day at the A.Alinda Site

"Children, you know that Principal Theler always tells us how special our class is. Well I have news; we have another special person!" Mrs Goddard announced. "The next place in the museum we are going to is the artifact display from the archaeological site known as the **A.Alinda Site** in Wisconsin. Not many of you know this but our own little Timmy spent a day at the site participating in an excavation."

The children all whispered excitedly and hurried to the next room. "Everyone sit here please." Mrs. Goddard directed. "Thank you for gathering so quickly and respectfully, children. Timmy please come to the front so the other students can ask you questions about your day." Timmy shuffled to the front of the room with red cheeks.

"Timmy, start with telling us how you were able to go to the A.Alinda Site." Mrs. Goddard said.

Timmy began to explain, "My mother's friend, Professor Jim, was visiting us and I asked him about a rock I found that looked like it could have been an arrowhead. He looked at it and told me it wasn't an arrowhead but was a thing called a fragment that could have been made by an ancient person making an arrowhead or another stone tool."

"That's awesome!" Denise exclaimed

"Yeah it was, Denise. Professor Jim then asked me if I wanted to visit him at a dig he was involved in. I said YEAH! So my mom worked out a day I could go and took me to the A.Alinda site" Timmy explained.

Mrs Goddard said, "Wow, that is exciting. Who has a question about Timmy's day?"

Russell said, "Your mom takes you to archaeology sites."

Mrs Goddard sighed, "Yes Russell, Timmy's mom took him to the site. Let's stick to questions please. Ruth, thank you for raising your hand."

"Timmy, did you just go and start digging?" Ruth asked.

Timmy smiled and said, "No, that's what I thought I would do, but it is a lot different than that. The whole site was staked off into squares and only some of the squares were being dug up, but it was actually scraping, not digging."

Marina raised her hand and asked, "What do you mean scraping?"

Timmy explained, "You place the shovel flat against the ground and push it like this," Timmy demonstrated the motion. "You only take off a very thin layer of soil and then throw it in a screen to separate the dirt from all the rocks and artifacts."

Mrs. Goddard called on Erik next. "Did you dig, I mean scrape up any artifacts, Timmy?" Erik asked excitedly.

Timmy said, "I scraped up a few small pieces of rock they call flakes. They are really cool but I would never have known what they were until an archaeologist

named Kathy explained what they were. After she showed me how to identify them it was easier to know what they were."

Kirsten asked the next question, "What other things did you do besides dig?"

Timmy face lit up. This is the part he was waiting for! "I got to do the sifting of the dirt through the screen. That is when the coolest thing ever happened!"

Andrew couldn't hold back his excitement and asked, "What happened, did you find something really awesome?"

Timmy smiled and said, "I uncovered a spearhead from the Paleo Indians. Professor Bonnie, another archaeologist, said it could be as old 10,000 years."

The students all gasped and David said, "Wow, I wish I could see that!"

Mrs. Goddard knew the time was right and said, "Well David, it just so happens today the museum is unveiling the spearpoint. If you notice, behind you there is a cabinet covered in a sheet." Everyone quickly looked over their shoulders.

Ms. Baumgartner, the docent of their tour, was waiting by the case and said, "Gather round children, and I'll unveil our new exhibit." The children quickly gathered round with faces shining with excitement. Katie and Jamie went on their tiptoes and Sean leaned in to get a better view. "Drumroll please," Ms. Baumgartner said. The students enthusiastically pounded their thighs following the rhythm set by Sue as Ms. Baumgartner pulled back the sheet.

Timmy beamed with pride. In the display was the spearpoint he helped find. There was also a picture of Timmy at the A.Alinda site holding the spearpoint. The display also had an explanation of the purpose of the dig and the question the archaeologists were trying to answer - Did the Paleo Indians live in this part of Wisconsin? Timmy's find was one of the artifacts that helped answer that question.

The students all took turns looking closely at the display and many of them congratulated Timmy with high fives and fist bumps. As the class was leaving the museum Lynn noted to her BFF Beth, "Wow we have quite the special class. Randy played his violin concert for the mayor, Alison won the gator wrestling competition, Katelyn won the log-rolling world championship, Laurie's quilt is on display at the town hall, and Jason got that 30 point buck last year."

Shannon said, "Don't forget about Denise saving the president's puppy last year! I wonder who is next!"

Chapter 4 Why Archaeology Is Important

Archaeologists are important because they carefully study to learn about archeological sites, they teach us about the past, and most of all, because they preserve historical sites for future generations.

One reason that archaeologists are important is because they carefully study and learn about archaeological sites. For example, archaeologists carefully sift through dirt in a very organized fashion in order to find all the relevant information

and artifacts. Archaeologists also catalog and organize the artifacts they find so they can understand their importance. Finally archaeologists are important in their study of archaeological sites because they take all that information and use it to interpret how people of the past lived.

Another reason that archaeologists are important is that they teach us about the past through their study of the artifacts they find at the sites. When they find artifacts like material from another part of the continent they learn that ancient people travelled great distances or traded with others. Archaeologists also teach us about the past by sharing the information they got from their sites with us through books, journals and lectures.

Although archaeologists are important because they carefully study and learn about archaeological sites and because they teach us about the past, archaeologists are important especially because they preserve historical sites for future generations. For example, archaeologists often only excavate small portions of sites in order to answer the questions they had; they leave a majority of the site intact for future generations and the questions they may have. Also, archaeologists carefully preserve features like storage pits and structures so that others may see and analyze them in the future. Finally, archaeologists carefully respect burial sites and avoid disturbing them.

Glossary

Archaeological Site - a place where archeologists find artifacts and features

Archaeologist - a scientist who learns about past people through studying the artifacts and features they left behind

Archaeology - the study of people from the past based on artifacts

Artifact - things made by people

Cataloging - recording and tracking the artifacts found in a dig

Digs - removing the soil in order to uncover artifacts and features

Excavation - carefully removing the soil from a site in order to find artifacts

Excavation Unit - a specific site in a planned dig area that will be excavated

Features - immovable human made things

Systematic - a method or a plan

Surveying - an organized attempt to identify where archaeological sites are